

Appln. No. 10/625252
Amendment dated July 30, 2007
Reply to Office Action mailed April 30, 2007

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This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims (deleted text being struck through and added text being underlined):

1. (Currently Amended) A method for providing one or more real-time marketing opportunities to third parties during a sales transaction between a customer and a seller for purchasing a product, the real-time marketing opportunity being offered by the seller, the method comprising:

- establishing a communication connection between the seller and the third parties;
- determining an occurrence of the sales transaction;
- issuing, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, an alert over the established connection to the third parties that the sales transaction is in progress and a bidding process is open for soliciting bids on at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities;
- establishing a time duration for the bidding process associated with the at least one real-time marketing opportunity;
- receiving, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, one or more bids from one or more of the third parties for the at least one real-time marketing opportunity; and
- determining a winning bid for each of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities included in the bidding process based on the one or more bids raised;
- including, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities corresponding to the winning bid; and
- completing the sales transaction between the seller and the customer for the product.

2. (Cancelled)

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3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of: a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of establishing a communication connection further includes:

offering general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities on an Internet site associated with the seller, and
allowing the third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of establishing a communication connection further includes:

offering general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities via a telephone conversation with the seller; and
allowing the third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

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7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus for providing one or more real-time marketing opportunities to third parties during a sales transaction between a customer and a seller for purchasing a product, the real-time marketing opportunity being offered by the seller, the apparatus comprising:

- a network; and
- a processor coupled to the network, the processor being configured to:
 - establish a communication connection between the seller and the third parties over the network;
 - determine an occurrence of the sales transaction;
 - issue, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, an alert over the established connection to the third parties that the sales transaction is in progress and a bidding process is open for bidding on at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities;
 - establish a time duration for the bidding process associated with the at least one real-time marketing opportunity;
 - receive, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, one or more bids from one or more third parties for the at least one real-time marketing opportunity; ~~and~~
 - determine a winning bid for each of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities included in the bidding process based on the one or more bids raised;
 - include, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities corresponding to the winning bid; and
 - complete the sales transaction between the seller and the customer for the product.

8. (Cancelled)

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9. (Original) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

11. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the processor in establishing a communication connection is further configured to:

offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities on an Internet site associated with the seller; and

allow the third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 7, wherein the processor in establishing a communication connection is further configured to:

offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities via a telephone conversation with the seller; and

allow the third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

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13. (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture for providing one or more real-time marketing opportunities to third parties during a sales transaction between a customer and a seller for purchasing a product, the real-time marketing opportunity being offered by the seller, the article of manufacture comprising:

a computer readable medium; and

instructions carried on the computer readable medium, the instructions being readable by a processor, and the instructions causing a processor to:

establish a communication connection between the seller and the third parties over a network;

determine an occurrence of the sales transaction;

opening a bidding process for bidding on at least one of the one or more real-time opportunities for marketing to the customer purchasing the product to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product;

issue, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, an alert over the established connection to the third parties that the sales transaction is in progress and a the bidding process is open for bidding on at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities;

establish a time duration for the bidding process associated with the at least one real-time marketing opportunity;

receive, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, one or more bids from one or more of the third parties for the at least one real-time marketing opportunity and

determining a winning bid for each of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities included in the bidding process based on the one or more bids raised;

include, by the seller during the occurrence of the sales transaction, at least one of the one or more real-time marketing opportunities corresponding to the winning bid;

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permit the customer to take advantage of any offers in the one or more marketing opportunities as a part of the sales transaction;
receive from the customer, during the sales transaction, a response to an offer made as part of the one or more marketing opportunities; and
complete the sales transaction between the seller and the customer for the product and any offer made as a part of the one or more marketing opportunities.

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

16. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 14, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities include an opportunity to provide one or more of a group consisting of a peripheral, a promotion, a download, and an offer, to be included in the transaction for the purchase of the product.

17. (Previously Presented) The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the instructions in causing the processor to establish a communication connection further cause the processor to:

offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities on an Internet site associated with the seller; and

allow the third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

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18. (Previously Presented) The article of manufacture of claim 13, wherein the instructions in causing the processor to establish a communication connection further cause the processor to:

offer general information associated with the one or more real-time marketing opportunities via a telephone conversation with the seller; and

allow the third parties to establish a communication connection with the seller over the Internet site.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities includes an opportunity to provide an offer, and additionally comprising the step of communicating the offer to the customer during the occurrence of the sales transaction.

20. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities includes an opportunity to provide a download of a software program, and additionally comprising the step of offering the download of the software program to the customer during the occurrence of the sales transaction.

21. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the one or more real-time marketing opportunities includes an opportunity to provide a peripheral device that is peripheral to the product being purchased in the sales transaction, and additionally comprising the step of including the peripheral device in the sales transaction for the product during the occurrence of the sales transaction.

22. (New) The method of claim 1, additionally comprising permitting the customer to take advantage of the one or more marketing opportunities as a part of the sales transaction prior to the sales transaction being completed.

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23. (New) The method of claim 1, additionally comprising receiving from the customer, during the sales transaction, a response to an offer made as part of the one or more marketing opportunities such that taking advantage of the offer is included as a part of the sales transaction .